

**Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 3, 2015
Senate Bill 984 – Support**

Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Agnes Quinones. I am an Education Consultant in the State Department of Education; president of the P3A bargaining unit which represents education administrators in the SDE, BSBE, DOHRS, the Office of Early Childhood, and DAS; and a member of the State Education Resource Center's Board of Directors. I submit this testimony in support of S.B. No. 984, An Act Concerning the Unionization of Agricultural Workers, Nonpartisan Legislative Management Employees and State Education Resource Center Employees.

SERC professional staff have worked side by side with our members to help carry out the federal and state regulations that guide the work of education. Many of the staff have left administrative and teaching positions in school districts throughout the state, leaving behind local collective bargaining protection to join the ranks of SERC because of the important work of the agency. SERC has organized itself in order to support the execution of the education plan developed every five years. SERC staff job titles are the same as P3A. SERC's professional staff carries out similar duties as our members in education, and many have terminal degrees as well. SERC's work is an extension of our education work.

This legislation is needed because SERC employees' job classification falls into a grey area of labor law in this country. They do not qualify for collective bargaining rights under the National Labor Relations Act because they are considered to be quasi-public employees, and yet they are not state employees. In many ways this is a distinction without a difference. The employees at SERC are our peers and they deserve the same protections on the job as others doing this work. This legislation would give SERC employees the right to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining; it does not force them to join a union, but it gives them the option to do so. This is a positive step that will lead to greater stability and democracy in their jobs.

I encourage you to support S.B. No. 984.

Thank you.

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